in ever-increasing numbers from as far away as Najran and Dhaufar. 166
They go there at present with the intention of collecting enough money 177
to buy a camel or two, so that they can build up a new herd, or perhaps
marry, when they return to their homelands, but I think that every year
an increasing number will settle down more or less permanently round
the oilfields.

In the desert the Badu need very little to keep themselves alive. Their 438
herds provide them with milk, butter, and occasionally with meat, but 433
they have certain requirements which they cannot supply for themselves. 511
They need cloth and cooking pots, knives, ammunition, an occasional
load of dates or grain, and such simple luxuries as a handful of coffee or
a little tobacco. To get these things they visit the villages or towns and
sell a goat, a little butter, water skins, rugs, and ropes. Life in the desert
ceases, however, to be physically possible if the few but entirely essential
commodities that the desert Arab has hitherto been able to buy in ex-
change for the products of the desert become too expensive for him to
afford, but the rise in the standard of living along the Persian Gulf is
bound to send up the price of food and clothing, and the slightest rise is
now fatal to the desert economy. For the Badu have already lost several 489
important resources. In the past, desert transport was in their hands, but 231
now lorries have largely replaced camels. There was also a constant
demand in the towns and villages for good riding camels, which were
hired by the nomads, and sheikhs would pay big prices for the best breeds.
Now most of the villagers and townsmen drive about in cars. Two years
ago, when I and my companions rode from Sulayil to Laila along the
motor road, the villagers asked us why we did not go in cars "like the
Muslamin." A Badui often loses all or nearly all his animals from disease, 434
but where the tribes are still unadministered he can borrow a mount and 511
join a raiding party and perhaps repair his fortunes. In unadministered
areas they can also levy a certain amount of blackmail off the villagers,
and the village sheikhs are prepared to keep on good terms with the tribes
by giving them presents and much hospitality. Badu, however, meet with
little sympathy from modern and progressive Arab administrators, who
regard them as representing an outlook and way of life which they are
anxious to abolish.

The Badu love money; even to handle it seems to give them a thrill, 181
and I have often thought that when they are talking in their sleep they 577
must be counting piles of dollars. Yet I have never had a single dollar 461
stolen on my journeys, though my money has always been carried in 315
unsealed bags distributed at random among the saddle-bags of my com-
panions. The Badu are always obsessed with tales of buried treasure.
There is *dhahab* (gold) to be found here and *dhahab* to be found there,
under sand dunes, rocks, or even in the middle of quicksands. So
naturally the oilfields draw them like a magnet from all over Arabia,
and, once there, they find that they can get money for sitting in the shade
and guarding something, or for doing work which is certainly easier than
watering thirsty camels on a nearly dry well in the middle of summer.
There is plenty of good food, abundant sweet water, and long hours for 511
sleep. They have seldom had these things before, and now they are being 166